



## Traffic Safety News and Facts for Employers

### Michigan News

#### **13<sup>th</sup> Annual Traffic Safety Summit 2008**

Mark your calendar and be prepared to learn about the latest traffic safety information, research, and technology at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit. The conference features the four E's of traffic safety—Education, EMS, Engineering, and Enforcement. Save the date, March 11-13, 2008 for the Summit taking place at the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, East Lansing, Michigan. More information will be available in coming months. Visit [www.michigan.gov/ohsp](http://www.michigan.gov/ohsp) for updates.

### Latest Traffic Safety News

#### **AAA Suggests Preparing Fleets for Winter Weather**

Companies should inspect and prepare their vehicles for the upcoming winter. AAA recommends making sure that tires are inflated properly, lights are operating, fluid levels are full and belts and hoses are in good shape. The most common cause of breakdown in cold weather is a dead or weak battery, so those should be checked and replaced if necessary. Each car should have a winter driving kit with a cell phone, flash light, snow shovel, ice scraper, traction mats, booster cables, flares, blanket, gloves, windshield wiper fluid and first aid kit. Drivers should check the weather before they leave and adjust driving habits for the conditions. They should also turn headlights on before the sun sets, clear the car of all ice and snow, signal well before they turn, avoid sudden stops and watch for icy bridges and stalled cars.

#### **SUVs Lack Some Protection in Side-Impact Crashes, IIHS Finds**

Larger vehicles are often seen as safer, but some sport utility vehicles may be lacking in side crash protection. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety tests vehicles in side crashes by striking them with a barrier moving at 31 miles per hour. The TrailBlazer and Grand Cherokee don't have air bags that protect front-seat occupants' chests and abdomens. In government side crash tests, the TrailBlazer, Grand Cherokee and Nissan SUV's received top scores. All except the TrailBlazer received scores of Good in frontal crash tests, but in rear crash testing only the Grand Cherokee received a Good. For more information, go to

<http://www.detroitnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071011/AUTO01/710110327/1148/AUTO01>

Source: Detroit News, October 11, 2007

#### **Fleets Would Get Tax Credit for Safety Features under New Bill**

A California representative introduced a bill that would provide tax credits for fleets that purchase trucks with certain safety technologies. The eligible features would be brake monitoring, lane-departure warning, collision warning and vehicle stability systems. Fleets would get a 50 percent credit on the cost of the system with a cap of \$1,500 per system, \$3,500 per vehicle and \$350,000 per fleet a year. "We believe that tax credits will accelerate the availability of important safety-enhancing technologies to heavy-vehicle operators and fleets," said a vice president for the Motor and Equipment Manufacturers Association. For more information, go to

<http://www.ttnews.com/articles/basetemplate.aspx?storyid=18499>

Source: Transport Topics, October 15, 2007



### **IIHS Refines Crash Tests as Millions Watch Online**

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) has refined its crash tests to show how smaller cars would fare in a side-impact crash with a sport utility vehicle. The tests use an aluminum "bumper" at to simulate an SUV coming at 31 miles per hour. IIHS's tests attempt to recreate real-life situations that other groups don't always cover. The institute also uses "female" dummies that are smaller than the standard size to see how side-impact crashes would affect the average woman. All of the dummies are fitted with sensors that indicate the types of injuries that would have occurred in an actual crash. IIHS runs dozens of tests on new cars and SUVs each year, and more than 5 million people watch the tests on IIHS's Web site. The Vehicle Research Center also runs frontal and rear-impact tests and gives vehicles ratings of good, acceptable, marginal or poor. For more information, go to [http://www.dailyprogress.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=CDP/MGArticle/CDP\\_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173353194771](http://www.dailyprogress.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=CDP/MGArticle/CDP_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173353194771) Source: The Daily Progress, October 21, 2007

### **Dr. Roadmap Teaches Employees to Arrive on Time with Less Stress**

The drive to work is a leading cause of employee dissatisfaction and can affect morale, absenteeism and productivity. Employers who want their workers to report on time and in a good mood can sign up for Dr. Roadmap's "Commute Management" course. Dr. Roadmap is David Rizzo, an on-air traffic reporter and commuter columnist, who teaches employees at their work sites how to take control of their commute. Dr. Roadmap's 1-2 hour training session coaches workers on when to take surface streets vs. the highway, how to mitigate driving stress, saving time and money by carpooling, using in-car navigation systems and lowering the risk of receiving a ticket. For more information, go to <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2007/10/prweb560198.htm>

### **Dash Express Tells Drivers How Long a Traffic Jam Will Take to Clear**

Navigation device Dash Express alerts drivers to upcoming congestion and also tells how much time it will take to get through it. The system gets location data from GPS satellites and transmits information about its travels back to the network. This two-way reporting allows the system to measure how fast traffic travels and use that data to compile a database of traffic information. The units are connected to the Internet, so nearby locations such as restaurants are available. Dash Express is still in the testing phase, but units may be available early in 2008 for \$600. Dash units offer multiple routes from point A to point B with ETAs for each. Information about restaurants, movie theaters and other attractions come from Yahoo! Local, so they're kept up to date. Dash Express will become even more beneficial when thousands of drivers start using them in the same area. For more information, go to [http://www.dailyprogress.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=CDP/MGArticle/CDP\\_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173353194771](http://www.dailyprogress.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=CDP/MGArticle/CDP_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173353194771) Source: The New York Times, October 18, 2007

### **CMV Safety Group Launches Enforcement, Education Campaign**

From Oct. 21-28 the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance conducted "Operation Safe Driver," a campaign to improve both commercial and non-commercial driver behavior through increased enforcement and education. The campaign's goals were to boost commercial vehicle enforcement, safety belt enforcement, roadside inspections, regulatory compliance and public awareness about how to drive around commercial trucks. Trucks and buses are involved in 12 percent of the fatal crashes on highways in the United States.

### **IIHS Releases Latest Issue about Benefits of Reducing Legal Blood Alcohol Content**

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's latest Status Report magazine covers the potential benefits for traffic safety if blood alcohol content legal limits are reduced.



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### **New Mexico Experiments with Keeping Drivers on Right Side of Road**

After a driver going the wrong way on a New Mexico highway killed five people, the state's Transportation Department is considering engineering solutions to keep drivers on the right side of the road. The department rearranged signs and is looking at redesigning a confusing median. It also tried using flashing solar-powered lights to warn drivers, but they didn't work when they got dirty. Pavement spikes similar to those used in parking ramps would not be effective at high speeds. Crews have tried installing reflectors that shine red when a driver is going the wrong way and white when they're driving the right way. The department's deputy secretary of highway operations also is considering less subtle countermeasures, like finding a way to shut down a vehicle completely when sensors detect it is going the wrong way. For more information, go to

[http://www.santafenewmexican.com/Local%20News/At\\_work\\_to\\_warn\\_wrong\\_way\\_drivers](http://www.santafenewmexican.com/Local%20News/At_work_to_warn_wrong_way_drivers)

Source: The New Mexican, October 25, 2007

### **Maine Driver License Materials Won't Be Translated**

Maine's Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap scrapped plans for Spanish and French translations of driver license examination manuals after the cost was deemed to high compared to the demand. "We were hopeful this could be a cost-efficient project, but based on the prices companies were quoting us to provide accurate translation, that hasn't proved to be the case," Dunlap said. The proposals averaged a cost of nearly \$75,000. About 64,000 Mainers speak French and 10,000 use Spanish as their primary language. Those applying for a driver's license can bring a translator with them when they take the written test. For more information, go to

<http://kennebecjournal.maine.com/news/local/4404569.html> or

<http://www.maine.gov/sos/news/2007/Translation.html>

### **Ignition Interlocks for All Cars Many Years Away**

As technology improves, some day every car may be fitted with an unobtrusive ignition interlock if privacy hurdles are overcome. "It's better to prevent somebody from breaking the law, and maybe killing or injuring someone, than to arrest them after the fact and try to prevent them from doing that again," said Anne McCartt, senior vice president for research at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. About 9,000 lives could be saved if drivers with .08 blood alcohol content and above were prevented from driving. Mothers Against Drunk Driving is pushing for alcohol interlocks for all drunk drivers, not just repeat offenders. Until the devices are nearly 100 percent accurate, experts agree they should not be placed in every car. Auto manufacturers are testing interlocks that are smaller and simpler to use. For more information, go to

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/21/automobiles/21ALKY.html?\\_r=2&ref=automobiles&oref=slogin&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/21/automobiles/21ALKY.html?_r=2&ref=automobiles&oref=slogin&oref=slogin) (requires free registration). Source: The New York Times, October 21, 2007

### **Carmakers Dream of Vehicles that Drive Themselves, Use Alternate Energy Sources**

Eight auto manufacturers predicted the future of travel when they submitted visions for how vehicles might appear in 2057 as part of the Los Angeles Auto Show's Design Challenge. Nissan proposed OneOne, a vehicle with three wheels that would use a GPS network to make driverless trips. Volkswagen's concept was travel pods that drive flat on the road but could turn upright in busy traffic. Toyota's proposed vehicle could absorb pollution to use it as fuel. General Motors' "OnStar Ants" would be computer-controlled and omni-directional. Audi imagined a hydrogen-powered vehicle, and Honda's would be a hybrid solar-powered vehicle capable of clustering with other units to save fuel. Mazda sees the vehicles of the future becoming much lighter and costing only \$5,000, and Mercedes envisions cars held together by magnetic forces that could allow for disassembling and easy storage. For more information, go to <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/car-makers-drive-visions-of-future/2007/10/21/1192301100151.html>

Source: The Sydney Morning Herald, October 21, 2007



### **Widespread Use of Vehicle Safety Features Would Have Saved Many Lives**

A majority of traffic fatalities could be avoided by effective technologies such as electronic stability control, according to a new study. Researchers calculated the odds of death in the United States from 2000-2005, involving certain makes and models of 1999-2005 model year sport utility vehicles, minivans and cars. Correlations of vehicle characteristics and risk factors also were examined. Fatalities in the vehicles studied would have been more than 40 percent lower if they all had ESC. Improved crashworthiness would have resulted in an additional reduction of 28 percent, and improvement to static stability would have reduced the deaths 11 percent.

### **New Vehicle Features Take the Wheel**

Automakers are offering high-tech features to help drivers back up, park and limit distractions. Ford is introducing a \$450 back-up camera option in some of its 2008 pickups and sport utility vehicles. The camera in the tailgate transmits video to the rearview mirror when the vehicle is in reverse. To help with parallel parking, Nissan is introducing a system in its Infiniti EX35 model called Around View Monitor that uses four cameras that display images on the navigation screen. Infiniti also unveiled a system that would apply brake pressure to certain wheels if the vehicle starts to drift out of the lane. General Motors has added active front steering to its electronic stability control system; the feature will take over the steering wheel for a split second if a driver fails to react. BMW is putting navigation prompts in its heads-up display, which shows at the base of the windshield in the driver's line of sight. For more information, go to <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/24/automobiles/autospecial/24safety.html> (free registration required). Source: The New York Times, October 24, 2007

### **West Virginia Drivers Most Likely To Hit Deer**

About 6.3 percent more car-deer crashes happened from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007 than in the same time period the previous year. West Virginia drivers are the most likely to be involved in a crash with a deer, according to State Farm claims data, with a chance of 1 in 57. Michigan came in second with the likelihood of a car striking a deer next year 1 in 86. Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Iowa rounded out the top five. The least likely state for car-deer crashes is Hawaii (1 in 16,624). The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety estimates there are 1.5 million car-deer crashes a year in the United States, resulting in 150 deaths and \$1.1 billion in property damage. This type of crash is more likely in the fall, so drivers should watch for deer crossing signs, use their high beams when possible, steer clear of deer whistles, and brake without swerving if a deer crosses their path. Source: State Farm, October 22, 2007

### **Trucks May Be Limited from Left-Lane Use in Florida**

Florida is considering restricting trucks to the right lanes on major highways. Semis in Orlando no longer can use the left lane on I-4, and the Florida Department of Transportation is thinking of enforcing the same rule on I-75 by 2010. The DOT said the highway would be safer because cars would no longer weave around trucks.

### **GM Looks to Software, Electronics for New Design Concepts**

General Motors is poising itself to lead the industry with its new focus on software and system-centered vehicles. The role of software engineering has been underutilized in the past, but GM's strategy of "new automotive DNA" changes the concept of car designs with software and electronics. The change in design principles can help solve challenges such as the need for renewable energy, driver safety, road congestion and affordability. "GM wants to extend the concept of a standalone system of vehicles that drive down the road to a vehicle that is interconnected both with other vehicles around it as well as the roads and terrain," a GM researcher said. With emerging technologies, GM hopes to be able to teach cars to sense what's happening on the road. Potential applications could





extend to the navigation system telling a driver how much it will cost to drive on a stretch of toll road, but the ultimate goal is for cars to be able to drive themselves. For more information, go to <http://www.itworldcanada.com/a/News/6b437baf-31d2-4844-89cd-068c0b5b8221.html>

Source: ITWorld Canada, October 26, 2007

### **Nissan's Robot Agent Seeks To Reduce Driver Stress, Fatigue**

Nissan is developing a concept called "Robot Agent" that cheers drivers up or calms them down in tense situations. The robot sits in the dashboard of the concept car Pivo 2 and uses cameras to read the driver's facial cues and determine whether he or she is getting stressed out or tired. The robot nods, shakes its head or blinks as it tries to talk the driver out of a bad mood. "Research shows that drivers in a positive frame of mind are less likely to be in accidents," a Nissan spokeswoman said. "If the robot can help create a connection with the driver or a feeling of happiness, the driver should be safer." The Pivo 2 is an electric vehicle that has wheels that turn 90 degrees so drivers can slide into a parallel parking spot, and the passenger cabin can turn 360 degrees, eliminating the need to back up. Nissan expects to have electric cars on the road by 2010. For more information, go to [http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyId=12&articleId=9044306&intsrc=hm\\_topic](http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyId=12&articleId=9044306&intsrc=hm_topic) Source: Computerworld, October 26, 2007

### **Vehicle Computers Test Drivers' Patience**

Although onboard computers can save frustration in the long run, initial setup may require a significant investment in time. One new owner of an Infiniti G35 spent 18 hours reading, programming, syncing, uploading, downloading and testing the car's features, but most owners will not be willing to spend that much time and energy. "I think that people have to have something that's very intuitive to use," said the director of the Human-Computer Interaction Institute at Carnegie Mellon University. To that end, automakers are testing voice commands and audio signals. Carnegie Mellon is working on a research project with General Motors called MOVE (Maps Optimized for Vehicular Environments). MOVE gives directions in stages and changes the scale of the map when necessary. For more information, go to [http://www.news.com/Help-I-cant-program-my-car/2100-11389\\_3-6215365.html?tag=nefd.top](http://www.news.com/Help-I-cant-program-my-car/2100-11389_3-6215365.html?tag=nefd.top)

Source: CNET News, October 26, 2007

### **Sample of Australian Community Shows Correlation between Workplace Stress, Road Rage**

A recent Australian study found a link between workplace stress and road rage. Researchers showed that people who perceive an imbalance between their efforts and rewards at work (effort-reward imbalance or ERI) may develop increased general anger, raising their chances of experiencing anger while driving. ERI has an even greater influence on driving anger in those who experience high overcommitment at work. Australian motorists reported lower levels of driving anger than Americans, but higher than British motorists. Source: SafetyLit, October 29, 2007

### **News from USDOT**

#### **Congressman Calls for Investigation into Traffic Data Program Contract**

New York Representative Anthony Weiner is calling for an inspector general investigation and congressional hearings into whether Traffic.com has a monopoly on providing traffic data to states and municipalities. The Transportation Technology Innovation and Demonstration (TTID) program provides federal funds to local and state agencies to help pay for the equipment to collect traffic data. The program has two parts: Part I, which involves a \$56 million contract with Traffic.com, and Part II, in which other vendors can compete for a \$5.5 million contract that covers two cities. Competitors are complaining, and Weiner wants to investigate whether the contract for solicitation was written



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specifically with Traffic.com in mind. A decision has not yet been made to hold hearings on the TTID program. For more information, go to <http://thehill.com/the-executive/weiner-calls-for-hearings-ig-probe-on-traffic-program-2007-10-19.html> Source: The Hill, October 19, 2007

### **FHWA Paves Way for Distracting Signs**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a guidance memorandum in September giving states permission to erect digital billboards along highways. The memo ignores the Highway Beautification Act, which bans changeable message signs and boards with flashing or intermittent lights. Unlike federal rulemaking, FHWA can issue such a memo without seeking public input. FHWA promised to research regarding the safety issues involved and will release the findings in 2009. In the meantime, sign companies are free to put up the billboards. A 2006 study showed 2 seconds of distraction increases risk in a crash; some of the messages take at least 5 seconds to read. Safety, not business interests, should come first on the nation's highways. For more information, go to <http://www.poconorecord.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071025/NEWS04/710250301> Source: Pocono Record editorial, October 25, 2007

### **Work-Home**

#### **SAMHSA Study Shows Many Teens Still Use Alcohol, Other Drugs**

According to a new report based on previous studies, about 1.2 million American teens smoke, 631,000 drink alcohol, and 586,000 use marijuana a day. "While other studies have shown that significant progress has been made in lowering the levels of substance abuse among young people in the last few years, this report shows many young people are still engaging in risky behavior," said Terry Cline, chief of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA's report also finds on any given day 8,000 teens try alcohol for the first time, 4,300 try their first drug, and 4,000 smoke their first cigarette. Source: JoinTogether, October 18, 2007

#### **Families in Market for New Car Should Look for ESC, Side Air Bags, Top Crash Ratings**

A Consumer Reports survey shows that 12 percent of new-car buyers rank safety as their first consideration, and 2008 models are meeting that demand. Experts say the safest vehicles for families are those with electronic stability control, good crash-test results and side-curtain air bags for all rows. Reliability also is an important factor, because breaking down on the side of the road increases risk of a crash. A four-door midsize or large car is almost always a safe bet. Shoppers should consider everyday use instead of focusing on features they would seldom use but might come in handy. Parents should take a child safety seat with them when car shopping to make sure it fits in the new vehicle. For more information, go to <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21185036/> Source: Forbes, October 11, 2007

#### **Company Encourages Employees to Take Traffic Safety Home**

BT again has launched its Family and Friends Road Safety Program in time for Road Safety Week. The company is asking its employees to drive safely at home and with their families. "We feel that the ongoing development of our family and friends initiative is a natural extension of this program, and an opportunity for friends and families to participate in a scheme which is already helping to keep BT employees safe at work," BT's group safety advisor said. Source: FleetNewsNet, October 11, 2007



### California DMV Uses Popular Web Sites To Educate Teens

To reach teen drivers, the California Department of Motor Vehicles is posting videos on YouTube and MySpace. Young drivers can take a virtual driving test by clicking on "The Top 10 Reasons for Failing the Drive Test" on YouTube. "YouTube gets millions of visitors every day, and the DMV saw this as an excellent tool to reach out to the masses," the DMV director said. "Each video clip teaches a very important aspect of driving." The videos complement the California Drivers Handbook. The DMV has its own page on MySpace and hopes teens will add it to their list of "friends." For more information, go to [http://www.news10.net/display\\_story.aspx?storyid=34103](http://www.news10.net/display_story.aspx?storyid=34103) and <http://www.youtube.com/californiadmv> Source: KXTV, October 18, 2007

### Carmakers Add Pedestrian Safety Features

Automakers are looking at ways to reduce injuries to pedestrians hit by one of their vehicles. Honda, Toyota and Volvo have all added safety features, such as softer and more absorbent car hoods, more space between the engine and hood and collapsible hood hinges. More than 5 million Honda and Acura vehicles with pedestrian safety features are on the road, and Toyota is adding them when it introduces or redesigns a model. General Motors introduced its first pedestrian-safety features on the 2008 Saturn Vue. The next step in pedestrian safety is tweaking sensors to detect a person's presence. For more information, go to [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-10-24-pedestriancars\\_N.htm?csp=34&loc=interstitialskip](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-10-24-pedestriancars_N.htm?csp=34&loc=interstitialskip). Source: USA Today, October 24, 2007

### International Traffic Safety News

#### Toyota Offers Safety Feature for Inattentive Drivers

Toyota has developed a new system that will help keep drivers' eyes on the road. It features an image-processing computer that uses a camera to determine when the driver isn't looking straight ahead. When the driver's eyes start to wander, a light flashes and beeps on the dashboard display. The brakes are engaged if the driver doesn't respond. The system will be available in Lexus models sold in Japan next year.

#### Technology Can Help Managers Track Fleet Performance

Fleet managers can use new technology to increase safety and reduce pollution. With the help of swipe proximity credit cards like MasterCard's PayPass, managers can track drivers' fuel consumption and purchase trends. Details of the transactions can be uploaded in real-time, which allows fleet managers to compare fuel prices and check driver performance. Other vehicle technology, such as remote tire pressure monitoring, can show whether a vehicle needs servicing or has a mechanical problem. Source: FleetNewsNet, October 18, 2007

#### Futurist Predicts Cars Will Drive Themselves, Run on Tracks

In just 18 years, cars will drive themselves, futurologist Ian Pearson predicts. "An elderly lady, maybe 90 years old, will be able to call up a car which will arrive outside the door and take her wherever she wants to go, even though she is unable to drive herself," Pearson said to a group of BT Fleet's customers and suppliers. Pearson also said that by using switches and sensors, "pods" could move around the railway network, increasing capacity 100-fold. He predicted that soon, technology will be 10 times better but cheaper. Source: FleetNewsNet, October 18, 2007

#### Advisory Group Wants Speed Limiters on All Fleet Vehicles

The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) recommends that all fleet cars be fitted with intelligent speed adaptation (ISA) systems. The Department for Transport recently finished an 11-month pilot testing of the system, which restricts a vehicle's speed by using GPS and a



database of speed limits. Only in an emergency can a driver override the system. "We could see a 55 percent reduction in fatal accidents," PACTS' director said. The next step is for local authorities to provide locations of each speed limit change for the national database. The PACTS report found that from a quarter to one-third of all traffic crashes involve someone who was on the clock, and company car drivers are 50 percent more likely to be injured in a crash. PACTS recommends the formation of a road death unit to investigate on-the-job fatal crashes. Source: FleetNewsNet, October 18, 2007

### **Drivers Miss Feedback from New, Quieter Cars**

Brunel University's Driving Research Laboratory found that drivers are less aware of their surroundings when they don't get feedback from their vehicles. "Cars provide timely informal chatter such as engine noise and road noise, which keeps us attentive and informed of our situation on the road," Dr. Guy Walker said. "If this feedback is removed through car design innovations, the whole nature of driving could change completely, potentially putting lives at risk." New-car drivers on a 14-mile route did not react to how their car was behaving and responding to the environment as much as drivers of older cars. Feedback helps drivers monitor vehicle speed without looking at the speedometer. Drivers of new models do compensate for the lack of feedback, but the extent is not known. Source: FleetNewsNet, October 15, 2007

### **Danish Campaign Uses Multiple Methods to Increase Seat Belt Use**

Denmark's biggest cities took part in a "buckle up" campaign this spring to increase the use rate from 87 to 90 percent. Posters featuring fathers and sons were displayed in day care centers, because children have a large influence on their parents' behavior. Crashed cars were placed at the entrance to shopping centers, and "squeezing patrols" occurred the first day of the campaign when volunteers hugged everyone they encountered with soft, seat-belt buckle hands. The Danish Road Accident Investigation Board found that: three of four people who died in a crash would have survived if they had buckled up; injuries are more severe for those who don't wear a seat belt; and most crashes happen on shorter trips. The campaign publicized common excuses for not wearing a seat belt, such as "This is not my car," "But I live right there!" and "I don't even have a driver's license." For more information, go to <http://www.nordicroads.com/website/index.asp?pageID=156> Source: Nordic Roads

### **Campaign Urges Fleets To Look Over Employees**

Fleet operators are the target of an upcoming campaign to make sure they meet their legal obligation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employee drivers. About a third of crashes involve people driving for work, resulting in 1,000 fatalities a year, UK Road Safety Minister Jim Fitzpatrick said. "We have to do our utmost to push the message that driving for work can, and should, be managed like any other part of the business," he said. Future campaigns will focus on distracted driving, fatigue and drivers rushing to appointments. Source: FleetNewsNet, October 25, 2007

### **UN Secretary-General Reports on Global Road Safety**

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon issued his first report to the UN General Assembly on international road safety. The report includes achievements of the UN Road Safety Collaboration, a group of more than 40 agencies that the World Health Organization facilitates. Highlights include best practice manuals designed to address drunk driving, seat belts, helmets, speed and visibility. For more information, go to [http://www.who.int/roadsafety/news/un\\_sg\\_report\\_2007\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/news/un_sg_report_2007_en.pdf)

### **Fleet Managers Have Financial Incentive To Increase Safety**

Besides legal and moral reasons to keep fleets safe, managers also see financial incentives. Reducing crashes lowers costs and driver downtime while improving morale. Safe drivers are often more economical, leading to improved fuel efficiency. If fleets were to follow recommendations made in a full





diver risk assessment and management program, crash rates could drop as much as 20 percent, producing a good return on investment. A crash-free workplace lowers insurance premiums and helps the company's reputation. After BT started its fleet risk management program, crash rates and costs dropped 40 percent in five years. Direct Communications saw its insurance premiums decrease by £20,000. "This is what accident management really means – not just dealing with those that have occurred, but doing all we can to prevent further accidents," a 3M insurance executive said. "Prevention is always better than repair." Source: FleetNewsNet, October 23, 2007

### **Half of UK Drivers Use Personal Vehicles for Work Use**

About 46 percent of small to medium-sized business let employees use their own cars for work. The "gray fleet," or driver-owned vehicles used for company business, constitutes nearly half of company cars in the United Kingdom. Even though gray fleet vehicles are not under the company's control the way fleet vehicles are, companies are just as responsible to drivers of both types of cars. Gray fleet cars create a sticky situation because managers don't know how well maintained they are, they could pollute more, and paying for mileage puts a dent in a company's bottom line. One way to steer clear of the issue is to use rental cars if non-company car drivers need to travel. At the very least, companies should document how they oversee the gray fleet to reduce risk of prosecution.

Source: FleetNewsNet, October 23, 2007

### **Many Drivers Neglect To Take Recommended Break**

United Kingdom Highway Code guidelines recommend drivers take a 15-minute break every two hours, but more than 50 percent of fleet drivers exceed that drive time without a break. Based on duty-of-care reports compiled over six months, the longest continuous journey lasted 6.5 hours. Many fleet managers admitted they were unaware of the guidelines.

Source: FleetNewsNet, October 22, 2007

### **Study: In-vehicle Weather, Traffic Information Could Save Time, Reduce Injuries**

According to the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, an in-vehicle weather and road condition warning service would help reduce injury crashes. Researchers used a literature review and expert survey to measure the safety impacts of real-time traffic information in vehicles. The study found that providing traffic information to the driver saves time and reduces stress but can be distracting. Injury crashes caused by bad weather or road conditions could be reduced by 11-18 percent if in-vehicle information systems were installed in every car in Finland. For more information, go to

<http://www.i2tern.info/doks/paper/paper110.pdf>